

feel sorrow when we sign these letters and see these names—approaching 2,700—but when you have actually experienced the loss, I know, having witnessed the distress my friend has gone through, I repeat, signing that letter to one of these families will never be the same.

So I say to Senator BAUCUS, who is part of the Senate family, one of the senior Members of the Senate, the thoughts of every Senator go out to you, MAX. And you did today what your heart said you should do. I wish we could convey to everyone in America, through you, what is going on in our country and what sacrifices families are making. We have to make their sacrifices stand for something.

Again, it is wonderful to have MAX BAUCUS as our friend. And more especially to me, on a personal note, it is important he is my friend.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I thank my very good friend from Nevada. I thank you very much. And I thank all my colleagues very much. We are one big family here in the Senate and in the country, and we are a great country. We will see our way through all this.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, we have just heard a very powerful and moving statement from the senior Senator from Montana, and we all understand he has suffered a deep and personal loss. I heard about the very close relationship Senator BAUCUS had with the nephew he lost, and he should know that his friends and his colleagues share that loss, that we grieve with him and we grieve with the family, that we especially appreciate the very moving statement he made.

It is our obligation—it is our obligation—to make certain these losses mean something and that, in the end, our country is successful against this threat.

I think every Member of this Chamber recognizes there is a real threat to our Nation and that we owe a deep debt of gratitude to those who answer the country's call, who come forward and serve when they are asked. This Nation owes much to those who have sacrificed, and we should never forget it.

Senator BAUCUS, you should know that your friends and your colleagues—this is a family—mourn with you and grieve with you and your family.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time for morning business allotted to the minority has expired. The majority controls 15 minutes.

Who seeks time?

The Senator from Kentucky.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the issue of national security. Safety and security of the American people must be our Govern-

ment's top priority, and we must not lose sight of the threat that faces our Nation. As we approach the anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001, I wish to remind all Americans that these were acts of war against the United States.

Since then, the United States and our coalition partners have fought back.

Despite what some might say, we have seen many successes. We have dismantled al-Qaida's terrorist network in Afghanistan and helped democracy rise in its place.

We are working with our allies to secure a united, stable, and democratic Iraq.

We have led an international campaign against terrorist financing, freezing over \$1.5 billion in terrorist assets in the United States alone.

Since September 11, there have been no terrorist attacks or acts on American soil. Our intelligence system has prevented 15 major terrorist plots that we know of and likely many others that are undisclosed. We have convicted over 261 defendants in terrorism-related cases and charged more than 180 others.

While we are continually working to make America safer, we still face serious threats from our enemies both at home and abroad.

To win the war against the Islamic fascists, we need an effective intelligence system that is lawful but also provides us with the necessary information to prevent attacks before they occur.

Only last month we were once again reminded that there are people out there who want to kill us and what we stand for. Fortunately, with the help of our British allies, we were able to prevent the terrorists from killing innocent civilians. These threats are real, this war is real, and the outcome will be determined by the action of our Congress and our people, and it will determine the future of our Nation.

This war is unlike any other war we have ever fought. It is both a battle of arms and a battle of ideas. This war of ideology is not an easy one and requires an advancement of freedom.

I know it is often difficult to turn on the news and hear reports from Iraq and Afghanistan and question what type of effective democracy we have in place. Have we so quickly forgotten the image 9 months ago of Iraqis waving their blue fingers in the air after they had voted in the first free elections in their nation's history? Have we forgotten the images of women and children sitting in classrooms in Afghanistan, free to learn without the fear of persecution or execution?

These are images I will never forget. They are images of democracy at work.

Just this morning we saw democracy at work when coalition forces in Iraq handed over control of the Iraqi armed forces to the Iraqi Government.

Effective democracies do take time and hard work. They cannot be created

overnight, but in the end they combat the ideology of Islamic fascists.

These terrorists recognize this and because of it are willing to kill innocent people to stop the spread of freedom.

I urge my colleagues not to let them succeed in their efforts and to join me in maintaining a united front against these terrorist nations and the terrorists across the world as we press ahead with important national security legislation in the coming weeks.

While we may disagree about different policies in our war against these terrorists, we must not lose sight of what is at stake for our country. We owe it to future generations—my 35 grandkids, 4 great-grandkids, 9 children, and their spouses—we owe it to all Americans because the cost of failure is too great.

I, for one, will not back down from the challenges and look forward to working with my colleagues on this matter.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MURKOWSKI). The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, I am pleased to join my colleague from Kentucky in commenting this morning during morning business on our efforts to protect against the continuing threats to our Nation, specifically protecting ourselves against the continuing threat from terrorists.

I am pleased to see President Bush in recent days presenting to the American people and the world what the facts are, what we have achieved in our efforts to defend our country against the terrorist acts and to protect against those who would harm American citizens around the world.

I am pleased to see that we have the strong leadership of the President on this issue and those who are working with him in the administration to carry out his policies and the policies we have identified here to support through votes in the Senate and the House.

Secretary Rumsfeld has come under a lot of criticism recently. Many people have been making speeches, calling for his resignation. I think he has done a good job. I think he has been a solid performer to carry out the mission that we have to perform to succeed in the war on terror.

The Congress has approved appropriations bills, authorizations for the work that is being done in this very difficult and challenging area. We now have before us in the Senate another appropriations bill providing funds for the Department of Defense. We have a bill that has been approved by our Appropriations Committee funding the Department of Homeland Security. In both of these measures, we have outlined an aggressive effort that should be carried out by our Government to protect our country, and the efforts that we have made and the administration has made are working. They are doing a great job.

Recent events in England have shown us how difficult the challenge is for other countries and how sometimes preemptive and decisive action is needed in order to protect the citizens of England and our country as well. We applaud the close working relationship we have with them. We benefit from their efforts, and we are grateful to them for the courage and the skill they have shown in this war on terror.

The Congress should continue to support the administration, not take advantage of opportunities for political bickering, partisan nitpicking—whatever one might want to call it. I think we need to take a higher ground in this debate and discussion of what our options are for protecting our country and our people. We don't need the constant drumbeat of partisan criticism against the President and the Secretary of Defense.

I think we should consider instead the impressive success of our soldiers, their courage, and the courage of their leaders and the skill of their leaders in mobilizing the resources of our country to guarantee success in the war on terror.

Just consider what is going on in Iraq right now. Madam President, under the leadership of President Bush and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld and GEN George Casey, our outstanding commander who is responsible for the multinational force that is in Iraq today, we are successfully helping Iraq organize, equip, and train their forces so they can take care of their own security interests.

Iraqi security forces are now in the lead and responsible for almost 75 percent of the military obligations and challenges that are faced today in Iraq.

There are currently 5 Iraqi divisions, 26 brigades, and 88 battalions that are in the lead in their areas of responsibility in Iraq.

More and more of the land area in Iraq is now under the control of Iraqi's own security forces, supported, of course, by coalition government troops who are there as well.

The other day, at a news conference in Baghdad, General Casey explained that he can see U.S. troop reductions in Iraq over the next 12 to 18 months because Iraqi security forces are progressing to a point where they can take on the security responsibilities of the country.

We have seen a significant step being taken when the Iraqi Ministry of Defense announced it is assuming direct operational control over the country's Armed Forces. That announcement was made today. The Iraqi joint headquarters, under the direction of the Ministry of Defense, will be fully responsible now for the Iraqi Air Force, the Iraqi naval force, and the Iraqi ground forces command.

These are facts, Madam President, which we ought to consider and applaud, and our Government and our Department of Defense and our soldiers deserve credit for the successes they

have achieved and the strong leadership that has been provided to them.

The United States and coalition forces have gradually turned over other security operations in Afghanistan, for example, to NATO forces. This has been a very impressive feat of leadership to bring together the forces of NATO originally responsible for European defense and now enlarged to include areas of concern to other NATO countries in what had been previously considered out-of-area interests.

NATO forces have taken control of the International Security Assistance Force in the north, west, most recently in the south, and now are making progress in the east to achieve control and success in defending the security of the people of Afghanistan.

There are 37 nation states involved in this effort. We ought to applaud the President, and we ought to applaud the Secretary of Defense for the successes they have achieved in moving us to this point in our dealings with Afghanistan. We have liberated Afghanistan. The Russians had experiences there. We recall their failures and the dangers that continued under the Taliban—the deprivation of rights, particularly of women and children. No schools were available. Now we have moved into a new area of freedom and hope because of the work that these 37 nations have achieved under U.S. leadership and with the U.S. military very actively involved.

So today I am pleased to say to the administration and the Secretary of Defense and the President specifically: We are proud of the work you are doing. We are going to continue to support you by providing the funding you need to carry out your missions and protect our country against terrorists and the other threats that we have looming on the horizon.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Madam President, how much time is remaining in morning business on our side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is only 15 seconds remaining.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 5 minutes as in morning business. I want to speak about the Iranian President who is going to be in Washington speaking today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. CONRAD. There is no objection on our side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAN

Mr. BROWNBACK. Madam President, I thank my colleagues for this opportunity to speak.

Later today, President Khatami of Iran will be speaking at the National Cathedral. I hope he is asked and he answers a number of questions about

what happened during his reign of terror in Iran.

President Khatami was the President of Iran, the lead sponsor of terrorism around the world.

President Khatami was President of Iran, a country that seeks to have the United States bow down in front of Iran and to Iran.

President Khatami worsened the human rights record in Iran to its own people. As we speak right now, a press conference is going on at the National Press Club of Iranians who have somehow gotten out of that country who were tortured under President Khatami and President Ahmadi-Nejad, the current President of Iran.

I hope that as we deliberate the Department of Defense appropriations bill, we recognize this threat. This is a country, Iran, that seeks to destroy Israel, seeks to attack and destroy the West, seeks to have us bow down. I will read the quote from President Ahmadi-Nejad that he said in July. He called on America and the West to bow before Iran saying:

If you would like to have good relations with the Iranian nation in the future, bow down before the greatness of the Iranian nation and surrender. If you don't accept to do this, the Iranian nation will force you to surrender and bow down.

Those are his words. We will not bow down. We are in a war on terrorism. We are in a war against Islamic fascism, which this is a statement of. I hope we recognize that. In the war on terrorism, terrorism is their tactic, and they use it through Hezbollah and Hamas, which Iran is supporting and operating. They direct it at us. We have to confront this and we have to confront this Islamic fascism. What they seek to establish is a militant dictatorship, an Islamic fascist dictatorship. This group has an object. They don't just wander around. Step 1 is to remove the United States from the Middle East. Step 2 is to establish an Islamic caliphate. This is an Islamic dictator over an entire region—a Shia crescent over an entire region of the world. These are his words. This is what they seek. They seek a nuclear weapon to be able to threaten the region, to be able to use in this region. Ayatollah Khamenei, the lead sponsor and organizer of the current Islamic Republic, in 1979, removing the Shah, came in and said if we destroy Israel, Allah will reward us. This is a governing theological philosophy that has not been walked away from by the current leadership in Iran. Let's listen to the words they say themselves.

Former President Khatami is going to be speaking in Washington, DC, tonight. He said in October 2000:

If we abide by the Koran, all of us should mobilize to kill.

This is October 2000. He should be asked, does he still believe that statement or support that statement.

Today, I will be introducing the Iran Human Rights Act, legislation designed to focus our attention on the